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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 06 COLOMBO 000146

SIPDIS

STATE ALSO PASS TO USAID
STATE FOR TSUNAMI TASK FORCE 1
USAID/W FOR A/AID ANDREW NATSIOS, JBRAUSE
DCHA/OFDA GGOTTLLIEB, MMARX, RTHAYER, BDEEMER
AID/W FOR DCHA/OFDA
TSUNAMI RESPONSE MANAGEMENT TEAM

SIPDIS

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KATHMANDU FOR OFDA REGIONAL ADVISOR WILLIAM BERGER
GENEVA FOR USAID KYLOH
ROME PASS FODAG
NSC FOR MELINE
CDR USPACOM FOR J3/J4/POLAD
USEU PASS USEC

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [AEMR](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [CE](#)

SUBJECT: SRI LANKA - EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMIS:
USAID/DART SITREP #7

REFERENCE: A) COLOMBO 00125

SUMMARY

1. As of January 16, according to the Center for National Operations (CNO), the earthquake and tsunamis had killed 30,920 people in Sri Lanka. The U.S. Military continues to engage in debris removal and clean-up activities in Galle and assist in the transport of relief supplies throughout Sri Lanka. According to the U.N. World Health Organization (WHO), there have been no disease outbreaks in Sri Lanka. The U.N. Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team and CARE conducted a Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment (REA), partially funded by USAID, to determine the environmental impact of the earthquake and tsunamis in Sri Lanka. End summary.

Death Tolls

2. The CNO, which is responsible for the overall coordination of the relief effort in Sri Lanka, reports that as of January 16 at 1700 hours local time, the earthquake and tsunamis had killed 30,920 people, injured 15,573 residents, displaced 431,224 persons, completely damaged 90,241 houses, and partially damaged 41,960 houses. Currently there are 6,020 persons missing. According to the CNO, there are 404 camps housing displaced persons. Sri Lankan officials said publicly January 17 that they expect the tsunami death toll to eventually surpass 40,000.

Situation in Galle

3. According to the USAID/Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) Logistics Officer (LO) located in Galle, local residents are beginning to clear drainage channels, but there is no coordination and work is not continuous. Debris is currently being piled along the side of the channels and has not been removed. The USAID/LO reported that many locals with local equipment are beginning to clear private property and pile debris along roadways.

4. The USAID/DART LO observed water trucks delivering water in Galle, but there is need for increased water distribution in internally displaced person (IDP) camps. The USAID/DART LO reported that the Austrian Military will produce water and distribute it in the Ambalangoda region, and the U.S. military will distribute water produced by the Austrian Military in the Hikkaduwa region, north of Galle. The water distribution to IDP centers in Hikkaduwa will start on January 17. [Note: The USAID/DART LO stated that the Galle Water Authority is aware that this is only a temporary solution, and it must develop a long-term plan prior to the departure of the U.S. and Austrian Militaries. End Note.]

15. The U.S. Military is still clearing rubble in 25 schools and plans to complete this clean-up by January 25, the first day schools will reopen. The U.S. Military will start clean-up on a road project on January 18.

16. The USAID/DART LO met with USAID/Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) implementing partner Christian Children's Fund (CCF) who will be building transitional shelters in Galle. The shelters will be supplied to 3,000 families throughout Galle and Matara districts. As of January 14, there are 69 IDP camps in Galle.

Coordination with the U.S. Military

17. The U.S. Military continues to transport produce (see Ref A) for the National Agrobusiness Council throughout Sri Lanka. The U.S. Military has now started flights to transport this produce to Trincomalee in northeastern Sri Lanka and Jaffna in northern Sri Lanka, in addition to Ampara in eastern Sri Lanka. Approximately 50 metric tons (MT) of produce will be delivered to Trincomalee, Jaffna, and Batticaloa during the course of the next week. According to the USAID/DART, the produce has been received positively by IDPs as it supplements the rice, dhal, and oil rations distributed by the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) and provides IDPs with micronutrients.

18. The U.S. Military continues to transport relief supplies for the GOSL and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). For the next week, the U.S. Military is flying 16 MT of food daily for the GOSL to IDP camps around Sri Lankan Air Force bases.

19. A detachment of 26 medical personnel were deployed to Jaffna Teaching Hospital and Point Pedro Hospital in northern Sri Lanka on January 16 to assist with clinical operations. On January 17, an additional flight arrived in Sri Lanka with a WHO emergency health kit, which includes medical supplies to support 10,000 beneficiaries for a 3-month period. This health kit will be transported to Point Pedro Hospital. There is also a small medical detachment in Galle supporting U.S. forces.

110. On January 17, the USAID/DART LO posted to the airport coordinated the receipt and transfer of 1,000 rolls of plastic sheeting and 10,000 water containers to GOAL and Community Habitat Finance (CHF). The relief supplies were equally divided between the two NGOs. The plastic sheeting will be used by GOAL on the proposed U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) temporary housing shelter program in Hambantota and Matara districts in southern Sri Lanka and Ampara District in southeastern Sri Lanka. The plastic sheeting provided to CHF will be brought to Galle for storage prior to the building of temporary shelters throughout the Southern Province.

111. As of January 17, there are 1,594 U.S. Military personnel operating in Sri Lanka. Between January 4 and January 15, the U.S. military completed 58 flights carrying relief supplies within Sri Lanka.

Health

112. According to WHO, as of January 16 there have been no disease outbreaks reported in Sri Lanka. Approximately 10 days ago an entire camp in Galle was vaccinated in response to 1 confirmed case of measles. WHO epidemiologists in Galle state that with increasing numbers of people leaving camps, it will become more difficult to sustain disease surveillance in a more dispersed population. At a January 17 CNO meeting, a Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) representative advised that there is no threat of communicable diseases from mass graves.

Water and Sanitation

113. On January 14, the USAID/DART Water and Sanitation Officer (WSO) attended a NGO coordination meeting at the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF). The USAID/DART WSO reported that progress is being made on the development of hygiene education materials. UNICEF currently has representatives working in the

nine affected districts in Sri Lanka, and NGO coordination meetings are being held in these districts at least once a week. The USAID/DART WSO reported that there is limited information on water and sanitation issues originating at the district level. The resources available for water testing, number of wells cleaned, and number of latrines constructed are not well documented. The USAID/DART WSO will continue to encourage NGO partners to provide assessments and reports to UNICEF and the Ministry of Urban Development and Water Supply.

Food

14. On January 15, the U.S. Ambassador, USAID/Colombo Mission Director, and members of the USAID/DART met with the Executive Director of the U.N. World Food Program (WFP). To date, WFP has dispatched enough food in Sri Lanka to feed 750,000 people and plans to continue food distributions through June. Approximately 25 percent of WFP funding for Sri Lanka will be used to finance logistical operations. WFP currently has three field offices in Sri Lanka in Kilinochchi (north), Vavuniya (north), and Batticaloa (east). WFP is also planning to establish an additional five field offices in Ampara (southeast), Galle (south), Mullaitivu and Jaffna districts (north), and Trincomalee (east). To respond to the emergency, WFP has also increased the number of staff in Sri Lanka and currently has 109 people working on the island.

Livelihoods

15. According to the U.N., the tsunami destroyed more than 80 percent of Sri Lanka's fishing fleet, and close to 18,500 fishing vessels were lost or damaged. The tsunami killed more than 7,500 fishermen, and 5,600 fishermen are still missing. The tsunami also displaced an additional 90,000 fishermen. The USAID/DART has programmed USD 10,000,000 for cash-for-work programs in affected areas to allow beneficiaries to meet their own prioritized needs and to create purchasing power in their communities.

16. The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has contributed USD 9 million to resurrect the fishing and agricultural sectors in Sri Lanka. FAO is currently conducting an assessment of the damage and reported that 66 percent of the fishery industry was affected by the disaster. The FAO also reported that the tsunami damaged 10 out of 12 fishery harbors, and there is an urgent need to repair the damaged ports.

Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment

17. In the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunamis, the UNDAC team initiated a rapid assessment of environmental conditions to provide information for the planning and management of relief and recovery operations. This assessment was conducted by UNDAC, CARE, and partially funded by USAID. The assessment began with field observations and consultations by an UNDAC member and was followed by a formal REA which started on January 7 and is currently being completed.

18. The key findings of the assessment include the following:

- a) the tsunami did not result in air or water pollution which could not be addressed by emergency operations.
- b) the disposal of debris and waste from the tsunamis is not taking place in an

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environmentally friendly manner and will

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probably result in future environmental problems.

c) sanitation is a major challenge in locations where tsunami victims are currently lodged and in proposed temporary camps. A key cause of this problem is the high water table in coastal areas, which reduced the effectiveness of latrines.

19. The key initial recommendations include:

- a) implement a program to manage the collection and

disposal of tsunami-caused debris and waste materials in an environmentally friendly manner, based on recycling and composting and a labor intensive public works approach (this has been piloted in Galle by the local government).
b)increase the means available to address the sanitation problems arising from the use of latrines in areas with high water tables.
c)increase the flow of information to tsunami survivors to allow them to make well-informed decisions on their own recovery actions and to reduce unnecessary exploitation of natural resources.

USAID/DART Staffing

120. As of January 17, there are 12 members of the USAID/DART in Sri Lanka. Of the 12 USAID/DART members, one individual is in Galle and another team member is in Male, Maldives.
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